

1893

Ch

22

On Dysentery
by

Henry Lorain

Passed March 19th 1825

11
A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Medical Faculty
in the
University of Pennsylvania
for the Degree of
Doctor of Medicine
by
Henry Lorain
of Pennsylvania

On the symptoms and treatment of Dysentery as it appeared in Clearfield County Pennsylvania on the head Waters of the Susquehanna River during the Months of July August September and part of October.

In the early part of the months specified above, and for some weeks before, there was a series of very wet weather; having ~~Rained~~ almost every other or every third Day for some weeks; the intermediate Days however were tolerably clear, with a hot burning Sun.

About the first of July, a few cases of this Disease made their appearance, which was pronounced by the Physicians of that Country at first, to be bad cases of Diarrhoea; but upon a more careful investigation, and the disease spreading

rapidly, it was found to be Dysentery of a very inveterate kind, Attacking Children, especially in the commencement, but in the course of a few weeks, Persons of all ages were equally liable.

In most of the cases which I saw, and which amounted to about two Hundred or upward, it began with a slight chill, Fever, and great pain in the Bowels, accompanied with Tenesmus; the stools very frequent and copious; they were of a watery consistence, mixed with Blood, Mucus, and a few Scybala; though in some cases, they consisted almost entirely of pure Blood, and in others of Mucus.

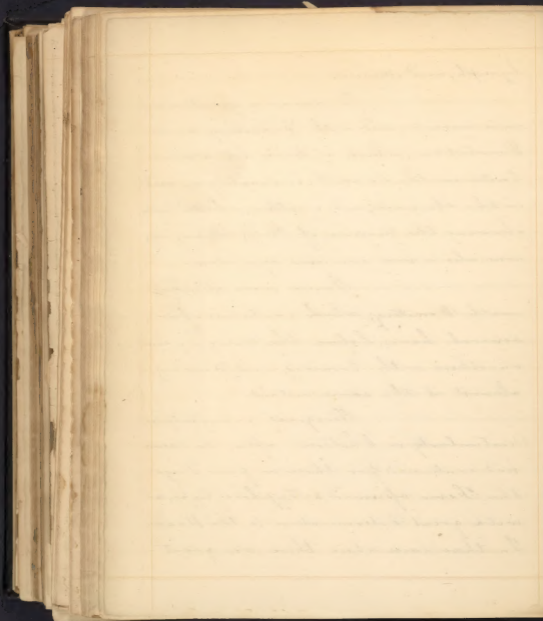
Occasionally there was a discharge of a membranous appearance, which on close examination, appeared to be nothing more than coagulable

lymph, and Muscles.

It was in a great many cases accompanied with Flatulency, and Eructations, which at times left a sour taste in the Mouth, indicating an acid in the Stomach; and in others, a bitter taste, shewing the presence of Bile; Strangury, was also a very common symptom.

~~with the disease.~~ Some were attacked with Vomiting; which continued for several hours, before the purging came on; others with Vomiting, and Purging, almost at the same instant.

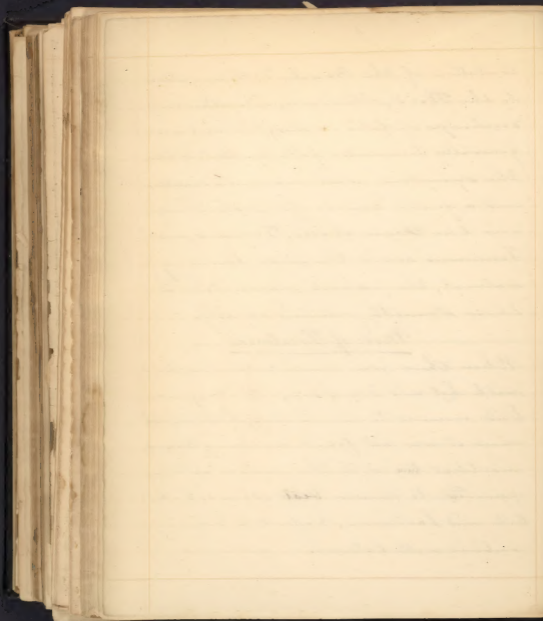
In a great many instances, (particularly in Children) after the disease had continued for three or four Days, the Fever assumed a Typhoid type, with great determination to the Head. In those cases where there was great



irritation of the Bowels, Determination to the Head, Strangury, and involuntary discharges of fecal matter, the disease generally terminates fatally. But when the symptoms were more moderate, and a gentle Diaphoresis took place, and the Fever abated, Tormentum and Tenesmus ceased the stools becoming natural, the patients recovered, and their strength returned rapidly.

Mode of Treatment

When there was much arterial excitement with hot and dry Skin, Bleeding was had recourse to immediately; but in most cases it was not found necessary; Purgings, and that ^{kind} with the mildest articles, appeared to answer best, such as Castor Oil and Sassafras, Castor Oil alone, or combined with Calomel.



When we were in the valley
of the river, and saw the Tongue river
large one, and a large one, and a large one,
and a large one, and a large one, and a large one,
together with the Tongue river was
generally, however.

If there are not alloy
the invitation of Harwich, Orem in the
solid form, the Black Drop, the Neutral,
Misture; burnt Bread; muscine &c.
-mata, and other articles calculated to
appease an irritated Stomach, were had
recourse to, and generally with effect.

After there had been exhibited, a dose of Carter's Oil in a Sarsaparilla, was annually resorted to, until the treatment appeared to be too weak to have its operation; in this case, Opium and Purgants, were given, as mild



Especially, extraordinary if there was any appearance of acid in the stomach and bowels, which was generally known by the sour Eructations, and eructings.

In some cases, the application of Hops to the Uterus in a liberal bag, and warm wet of warm vinegar appeared to be the only remedy that would relieve the Hemorrhage. In some cases, where the skin was hot and dry, they generally produce a gentle diaphoresis; but in other cases, the black dose, effected this desirable purpose either taken into the stomach alone, or combined with Castor Oil as given in the course of an Enema most with success as the following Elm bark.

Where there appeared to be an acute inflammation of the Uterus



Blisters were found to be of great service after bleeding and purging; or in cases where the system appeared to be too much reduced to bleed, and the inflammation of the breasts with great

When there was strong evidence of Abscess which was not often the case) but not given in small doses as found to answer extremely well.

If after bleeding or purging the skin remained hot and dry, and the Carina and Tendons not so great as to require the application of the Hot & Pungent, or if it failed to produce *Diaphoresis*, there was more or a continuation of *Spasmodic*, *Calam*, and *Phlegm*, were prescribed.

When the Disease took



on the Spasmodic character, with a
determination to the head, cold applications,
Blisters to that part, and sponging the
Body with warm Vinegar and Water,
were used; stimuli being found necessary
on account of the increased determination
to the head, were but rarely employed.

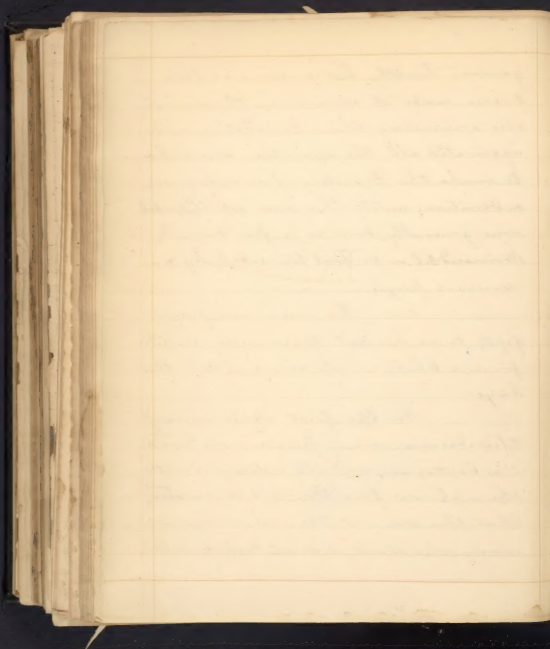
When there was a ten-
dency to relapse from convulsive spasms,
some mild sedatives were generally
successful in preventing it.

Prox to the Diet, the
Lachabitants of that part of the Country
consisting principally of Indians, and
their permitting their children to eat
a great deal of unripe Fruit, almost
every Child that was attacked, with the
Dysentery, was found to have Worms,
which did not appear to injure their

general health; but as soon as this disease made its appearance these animals also commenced their Depredations, and aggravated all the symptoms so much, as to make the Dysentery of secondary consideration, untill they were expelled, which was generally done in a few days, by Wormseed Oil, or pinkroot tea, aided by an occasional purge.

In some cases from fifty to an hundred Worms, were expelled from a Child in the course of two or three days.

On the first appearance of this disease many persons considered it as contagious, and all intercourse with the sick was forbidden; but it was soon ^{found} that this was not the case, as a great many who staid at home, took it, whilst



many of those who went from House to House, setting up with, and nursing the sick were exempt from it; so much so that I believe there was not a man in this part of the County in which it raged with most violence, who did not think himself as safe in the Chamber of the sick, as out of it.

